1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

622 301 [727] [422] to the reigning chief. The others were formerly also property of the chiefs, but are said to have been given as rewards of merit to the most successful leaders in the Tiribi war. The two belonging to the chief, as well as one belonging to the descendants of one of those warriors, all represent birds. The people call them eagles. The largest is between three and four inches across; the smaller of the chief's two, is double-headed. In connection with these "eagles" another royal emblem might 293 be mentioned. It is a staff of hard black palm wood, over four feet long. 622 The top is carved in the shape of an animal, not unlike a bear sitting on [532] his haunches. But there are no bears in this country, and it must have been intended for some other animal. Below this figure, the stick is square, and is carved out into four pillars several inches long, with spaces between them. In the interior, between them, is a cavity in which a loose piece of the same wood can be shaken about. It was evidently left there in the carving, after the fashion of the Chinese. Below this, the stick is plain. I tried every means in my power to obtain this, but could not buy it.

525 Games of chance or of skill are equally unknown, and even when brought into contact with civilization, they do not seem to take kindly to gambling. In fact, they have so little to win or lose, and that little is so easily obtained, that the inducement does not exist.

262 Their food is simple in material and there is but little variation in the manner of preparation. Of meats, besides chickens, they have beef and pork, which are however rarely used except at feasts. They know nothing of salt- [251] ing meat for future use and can only consume one of these animals when a large number is together. Besides the scarcity of beef is so great that probably no Indian possesses more than one or two animals at a time. [224] Wild meat, like peccary, red monkey, (the other species are rarely eaten,) [251] tapir, tiger, even otter, armadillo, and some other small animals are occasionally shot. In this case, all of the meat that is not eaten at once is dried as hard as a bone, and perfectly black, in the smoke of a slow fire. Larger species of birds like curassow are also treated in the same way. It is an interesting fact, universally attested, that the bones of this bird are absolutely poisonous to dogs, while the meat, though tough, is not unpalatable and is perfectly innocious to man. After a meal it is the never-failing custom to gather all the bones carefully, and either burn them or place them out of reach of the dogs. I do not know whether the flesh would be equally dangerous, though I doubt if it was ever wasted on a dog. This property is said to be due to some fruit or seed they eat. Of vegetable food, plaintains are the staple. In times of scarcity, bananas take their place, besides being eaten raw when ripe. The Indians also occasionally eat a raw ripe plantain, although they are coarse 252 and the flavor is inferior. The methods of preparation are, roasted green, when they make a poor substitute for bread; roasted ripe, when they are eaten with chocolate, with the idea of sweetening it. They are also boiled green, with meat, with green corn, or even alone. Ripe plan-

2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri

The late Theodoor de Booy once called the writer's attention to the fact that in certain of the West India islands planting dibbles were used as warclubs, and according to Fewkes, while every warclub among the Porto Rico Indians was not a dibble, every dibble was a warclub.[11] Our specimen bears upon its broad end the striation caused by contact with the earth, and on its side hacks and scars of sidewise blows as though it had seen use as a quarter staff. The handle shows a figure which seems to be a property mark.

411
412
[171]
[422]

Gabb[12] says:

"In their quarrels, a stick is used over six feet long, nearly an inch thick and about two inches wide, and made of the same wood as the bows, arrows, and planting sticks. It is very heavy, and is grasped by the fingers and thumbs of both hands in such a manner that they are guarded from a blow. They guard and strike an 'over-blow,' always holding by both hands . . . . During the wars between the Bri-bris and Tiri-bis at the beginning of this century, the principal arm used was an iron-headed lance fastened to a shaft barely four feet long. For defense, round shields were carried on the arm, made of the thickest part of the hide of the tapir."

231 better-suited for raising fowl, but is domesticated in Talamanca, where its principal diet consists of roaches. Ducks also are not common, and there is no native word for them nor for turkey. When found, they are kept inside the large house in a small compartment.

[234] Cattle are owned by only a few on the Coen
[262] River and lower Talamanca. On both sides of
[954] the range they are kept more as a bank account than for food. Milk is not used. In Ujarrás, Salitre, and Cabagra oxen are used for riding
[442] or carrying burdens on their backs (fig. 2, *d*).[1/4] In Ujarrás, wild cattle, most of which belong
794 to the church or, better said, to St. Vincent,
231 the patron of the community, roam the
422 savannas. This is a vestige of the ancient tithe and the animals are used only when the priest pays his yearly visit. On this occasion, the required number of steers for a communal
[411] feast are shot with bow and arrow. The cattle in Ujarrás that do not belong to the church are the property of three inhabitants who sell them when necessity demands. Chickens,
231 swine, and steers are eaten on special occasions
[262] such as "juntas" (*see* Reunions) and death feasts (*see* Death and Burial).

There are no horses in Chirripó or upper Talamanca, and only one or two in the Sixaola Valley. In 1956, there were two horses at Salitre, one at Cabagra, two at Ujarrás, and two at China Kichá.

262 Wild Foods. The diet of the Bribri and the Cabécares is supplemented by many noncultivated foods. In the list below, we cite only those which we were able to have identified by their Latin names.[71]

262 The fruit of *Reneahmia exaltata* (Aubl.)
137 Griseb is generally fried in lard. The red
252 flower of *Erythrina costaricensis* Micheli, the leaves and the tender part of the vine *Cyclanthera Naudiniana* Cogn., the sprouts of the female palm *Chamaedorea* sp., the leaves and tender shoots of *Phytolacca ricinoides* Kunth & Bouche, and a juvenile fern are boiled. The grainlike fruit of *Urera baccifera* (L.) Gaud is used as a substitute for rice. The wild papaya

partes Plátanos y yucas. . . ." There is no mention of maize at all.

[70] Stone, 1956.

[128] [71] Dr. Paul J. Shanks helped to gather and to classify these foods.

1/4 [see category 116 - END PLATE 1 - ANALYST]

765 sacrificing of a military macaw (*Ara militaris*)
782 over the grave.
825

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

614 certain clans still controls and keeps ritual
[423] property. This consists of drums or gold pre-
[756] Columbian figures (*see* Myths: *Clan Protec-*
[422] *tors*). Formerly the *usegLa* administered jus-
tice within the clan. Now the medicine man
[627] sometimes assumes this role although the most
usual method is to take matters into their own hands. In ex-
[692] treme cases such as a sexual offense within the
[681] clan or murder, poison is given or the offender
is buried alive. On the Pacific slope, land
184 tenure by individual clans disappears. Three
[423] or two groups, as the case may be, settle in
a given section such as Cabagra or China
Kichá, and own land as a single unit.

These people know, however, of their Talamancan counterparts and keep as a goal
[484] the idea of visiting, at least to know personally,
184 the home site of their clan on the Caribbean
[422] watershed. Clan-owned ritual property does
not appear on the Pacific. The family unit
692 on this side has been known to administer
justice, but this task is usually left to the Costa Rican civil authorities in the nearest center.

614 Gabb does not seem to have considered the
[114] clans, rather he makes a distinction in social
565 classes,[116] indicating the Cabécar *usegLa*, or
[793] high priest, as the spiritual head of both Bribri
and Cabécar, while the temporal ruler was
[643] Bribri. This lay head was known as the "King"
and tradition holds that there were two clans
of "Kings." These were not inter-marriageable. Only one clan of these remains today (*see* Non-Documental History of Talamanca). The
793 Indians recount that the most powerful indi-
692 vidual was the *usegLa* who spoke both Bribri
and Cabécar. It is said that complaints were passed from the "King" to him for decisive action. On such occasions, he retired to a secret and sacred cave which had much *pita* (*see* Fibers) at the entrance. There he had sacred jaguars known as "dogs" and snakes at his command. The last *usegLa* is supposed to
[164] have died from smallpox during the first half of the 20th century. The clan of the *usegLa*
614 still exists, however, in the upper Coen, Tals-
177

[P. 40(B)] SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri
Cabecar

601 tachiwa Mo Fa Fa
Fa Fa Fa
So So
So Da
Da So
Da Da

mikuwa Fa Mo Mo
Mo Mo Mo

423 **Land Tenure.** We have already noted that villages in the European sense are foreign to the Talamancans. The clan has a given area [614] for the use of their members. This involves a [241] river or creek (*see* Villages). The individual family plants in a different spot yearly within this territory (*see* Farming and Cultivated Foods). The Cabécares of the Pacific slope have begun to recognize land property. In [351] Ujarrás, fences are seen around vegetable and house gardens. The Bribri, however, have only demonstrated such tendencies in the vicinity of the school.

428 **Property.** The property understood as individual and which can be handed down at death [422] pertains to personal effects and the house. [423] When a man dies his property goes to his brothers and sisters. If he has a mother they go to his mother. When she dies they go to whomever she wants to leave them, a son, [178] daughter, etc. Today, however, everything [429] goes to the children—not to the wife. The wife remains as guardian for the children. When a man dies without leaving an adult son, his head wife receives everything, but she is obli- [736] gated to take care of the other wives until they remarry. The eldest son receives the greater portion, but all children have a share.

443 **Trade.** Markets were and are unknown among the Talamancan peoples. Trade was accomplished by itinerant groups or in areas set aside for this purpose. Products of the sea, 438 such as salt and *chaquira*, shell beads which [136] served as a medium of exchange, were important items in pre-Columbian times. Also in demand were gold, wild pigs, slaves, and cotton cloth.[140]

Certain vestiges of this custom remain. In fact, in the remote areas, and even in Salitre [437] and Ujarrás, articles are often traded and

[140] *See*, e.g., Fernández, 1886, vol. V.